



Documents of the Palestinian Resistance Movement

The Palestinian resistance organizations have put forward the creation of a democratic Palestine as the goal of their struggle. This pamphlet contains statements about this concept by three of the best-known Palestinian organizations: Fateh, the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP or DF), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

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A MERIT PAMPHLET

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FATEH

The following statement by Fateh is the concluding portion of a larger document entitled Towards a Democratic State in Palestine. This document was contributed by Fateh to the Second World Congress on Palestine held in Amman, September 2-6, 1970, and sponsored by the General Union of Palestinian Students. More than 200 people participated in the conference, representing nearly 100 national and international organizations and national liberation movements. Conferees came from the Middle East, Africa, Europe, the United States, and Asia. This statement was printed in The Militant, October 16, 1970.

Editorial explanations are in brackets.

It is quite difficult and risky at this early stage of the revolution to make a clear and definitive statement about the new liberated Palestine. Realism rather than romantic daydreaming should be the basic revolutionary approach. We do not believe that victory is around the corner. The revolution does not underestimate the enemy or its imperialist allies. What will happen during the years of hard struggle for liberation cannot be easily predicted. Will the attitude of Palestinian Jews harden or become more receptive and flexible? A further drift to the right, the stepping up of anti-Arab terrorism—in the Algerian OAS tradition—followed by a voluntary mass exodus on the eve of liberation will pose a completely different problem and will be quite regrettable.

On the other hand, joining the revolution and working with it will lay firmer ground for the new Palestine. The revolution is striving hard to achieve the second alternative. Guerrilla operations are basically directed at the military and economic foundations of the Zionist settler-state. Whenever a civilian target is chosen, every effort is made to minimize loss of civilian life—though one would find it hard to distinguish civilians and noncivilians in this modern spartan militaristic society where every adult is mobilized for the war. Hitting quasi-civilian areas aims at the psychological effect of shocking the Israelis into realization that the racist-militaristic state cannot provide them with security when

it is conducting genocide against the exiled and oppressed Palestinian masses. In the Dizengoff street bomb (Tel Aviv), Fateh guerrillas delayed the operation three times to choose a place (in front of a building under construction) and a time (12:30 a.m.) to maximize noise but minimize casualties. The result: few were injured, but thousands were shocked and made to engage in serious rethinking.

In conclusion, despite all uncertainties, there is the hope, the vision and the behavior of the Palestinian revolutionaries, designed to achieve a better future for their oppressed country. Answers must be thought out and found for myriad questions relating to this future. Even if the answers are tentative, they will start a dialogue which provides the road towards maturity and fulfillment.

Profile of the Democratic Palestine

1. The country

Pre-1948 Palestine—as defined during the British mandate—is the territory to be liberated, the territory where the democratic, progressive state is to be created. The liberated Palestine will be part of the Arab homeland and will not be another alien state within it. The eventual unity of Palestine with other Arab states will make boundary problems less relevant and will end the artificiality of the present status of Israel, and possibly that of Jordan as well. The new country will be anti-imperialist and will join the ranks of progressive revolutionary countries. Therefore, it will have to cut the present life-line links with, and the total dependence on, the United States. Therefore, integration within the area will be the foremost prerequisite.

It should be quite obvious at this stage that the new Palestine discussed here is not the occupied West Bank or the Gaza Strip or both. These are areas occupied by the Israelis since June 1967. The homeland of the Palestinians usurped and colonized in 1948 is no less dear or important than the part occupied in 1967.

Besides, the very existence of the racist oppressor state of Israel, based on the expulsion and forced exile of part of its citizens, even from one tiny Palestinian village, is unacceptable to the revolution. Any arrangement accommodating the aggressor settler-state is unacceptable and temporary. Only the people of Palestine—its Jews, Christians and Moslems—in a country that combines them all is permanent.

2. The constituents

All the Jews, Moslems and Christians living in Palestine or forcibly exiled from it will have the right to Palestinian citizenship. This guarantees the right of all exiled Palestinians to return to their land whether they have been born in Palestine or in exile and regardless of their present nationality.

Equally, this means that all Jewish Palestinians—at the present Israelis—have the same right provided, of course, that they reject Zionist racist chauvinism and fully agree to live as Palestinians in the new Palestine. The revolution therefore rejects the supposition that only Jews who lived in Palestine prior to 1948 or prior to 1914 and their descendants are acceptable. After all, [Moshe] Dayan [minister of defense] and [Yigal] Allon [deputy premier] were born in Palestine before 1948 and they—with many of their colleagues—are diehard racist Zionists who obviously do not qualify for a Palestinian status; whereas newcomers may be anti-Zionists and work ardently for the creation of a new Palestine.

In the interview referred to earlier [published in *al-Taleea*, June 1969], Abu Iyad, one of the officials of Fateh, reasserted that not only progressive anti-Zionist Jews but even present Zionists willing to abandon their racist ideology will be welcome as Palestinian citizens. It is the belief of the revolution that the majority of the present Israeli Jews will change their attitudes and will subscribe to the new Palestine, especially after the oligarchic state machinery, economy, and military establishment are destroyed.

3. The ideology

The Palestinians in the process of and at the time of liberation will decide on the system of government and on the political-economic-social organization of their liberated country.

(It should be repeated at this juncture that the term Palestinians includes those in exile and under occupation and Jewish settlers.)

A democratic and progressive Palestine, however, rejects by elimination a theocratic, a feudalist, an aristocratic, an authoritarian, or a racist-chauvinistic form of government. It will be a country that does not allow oppression or exploitation of any group of people by any other group or individual; a state that provides equal opportunities for its people in work, worship, education, political decision-making, and cultural and artistic expression.

This is no utopian dream, for the very process of achieving the new Palestine inherently produces the requisite climate for its future system of government—i.e., a people's war of liberation brings out new values and attitudes that serve as guarantees for democracy after liberation. Witness changing attitudes towards collective work in refugee and guerrilla camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Palestinians and other brothers joining them volunteer work and livelihoods. They are not exploited or enslaved labor. The values of human life change. Unlike the Israelis' napalm raids and indiscriminate killing, Palestinian guerrillas kill sparingly and selectively. New forms of human relations emerge. No master-slave relation can be attained among fighters for freedom. Increasing awareness of the international dimensions of their problem and discovery of who backs the oppressor and who supports the op-

pressed creates new responsibilities to the international community, especially to the supporters of liberation and democracy.

Therefore, Palestinians after liberation will not accept subjugation from anybody and will not reintroduce oppression against any group, for this would be a negation of their *raison d'être* and an abdication of their revolutionary existence.

This is quite obvious in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. After twenty-two years of oppression, humiliation, and manipulation by secret police and local exploiters, the camps have awakened to the revolution. In the process, the exiles have broken their bonds, have thrown out the secret police and its spies and allied exploiters, and have instituted democratic self-management. Medical, educational, and social services are being provided locally through the revolutionary organizations in a self-help fashion that has brought back dignity and self-respect. Crime rates in these camps have drastically gone down to 10 percent of their prerevolutionary magnitude. Self-discipline has replaced the police. The new militia is providing the link between the revolutionary avant-garde and the mass base. Democratic checks are built in. These Palestinians will not accept oppression and subjugation from anybody and will not enforce it on anybody.

Newsmen and other foreign visitors have discovered that nowhere in the Arab world can they find equally mature and tolerant people vis-a-vis the Jews than in the camps in Jordan and Lebanon and especially among the Ashbal: the fighting lion cubs. These young Palestinians (8-16 years) are almost totally free of any anti-Jewish biases. They have a clearer vision of the new democratic Palestine than that held by bourgeois city dwellers. These young people are the liberators of tomorrow. They will complete the destruction of Israeli oppression and the rebuilding of the new Palestine.

If the democratic and progressive new Palestine is utopia, then the Palestinian guerrillas and camp dwellers are starting to practice it.

Two Misconceptions

Several interpretations of the democratic Palestine have sprung up in different quarters. These require clarification and some corrections. An attempt will be made presently to discuss two of them that seem to be quite vital:

1. The call for a nonsectarian Palestine should not be confused with a multireligious, a polyreligious, or a binational state. The new Palestine is not to be built around three state religions or two nationalities. Rather, it will simply provide freedom from religious oppression of any group by another and freedom to practice religion without discrimination. No rigidification of religious lines is desired by the revolution. No hard and fast religious dis-

tribution of political offices and other important jobs is envisioned. The Lebanese model (where the reactionary, quasi-feudal, or commercial-capitalist hierarchy divides jobs and offices on the basis of sectarian lines to perpetuate its domination of the masses) is completely alien to the revolution.

Abu Ammar reiterated several times that the president of the liberated Palestine could be a Jew, a Moslem, or a Christian not because of his religion or sect, but on the basis of his merit as an outstanding Palestinian. Furthermore, religious and ethnic lines clearly cross in Palestine so as to make the term binational and the Arab-Jewish dichotomy meaningless, or at best quite dubious.

The majority of Jews in Palestine today are Arab Jews—euphemistically called Oriental Jews by the Zionists. Therefore, Palestine combines Jewish, Christian, and Moslem Arabs as well as non-Arab Jews (Western Jews).

2. The new democratic Palestine is *not* a substitute for liberation. Rather, it is the ultimate objective of liberation. A client state in the West Bank and Gaza, a Avneri-style de-Zionized or pasteurized Israel or a Semitic Confederation are all categorically rejected by the revolution. [Uri Avneri is a member of the Israeli Knesset and publisher of the largest circulation weekly magazine in Israel.] They are all racist blueprints to delude the Palestinians and other Arabs and continue Israeli hegemony and Palestinian subjugation. They all assume the maintenance of the basic aggression that led to the forced exile of Palestinians and the oppression of the masses. The *sine qua non* of the new Palestine is the destruction of the political, economic, and militarist foundations of the chauvinist-racist settler-state.

The maintenance of a technologically advanced military machine through a continuous flow of Western capital and exchange of population has led the expansionist Zionist machinery to perpetrate one aggression after the other. Therefore, liquidation of such a machinery is an irreplaceable condition for the creation of the new Palestine. When the machinery of the Nazi state was liquidated, the German people were liberated together with other nations that were oppressed by Nazi Germany, such as Poland, Hungary, Holland and France. The Germans were not liquidated.

The Transition, and After

It is quite logical to expect specific transitional collective accommodations immediately after liberation, and even a few remaining in the normalized permanent state, i.e., some collective or group privileges besides the pure individual privileges. Jews, or non-Jews for that matter, would have the right to practice their religion and develop culturally and linguistically as a group, besides their individual political and cultural participation. It is quite logical, for example, to have both Arabic and Hebrew as official

languages taught in government schools to all Palestinians, Jews or non-Jews.

The right of free movement within the country and outside it would be guaranteed. Palestinians desirous of voluntarily leaving the country would be allowed to do so. Immigration would be restricted in a transitional period to the return of all exiled Palestinians desirous of return. In a normal permanent state, however—subject to agreed-upon regulation and the absorptive capacity of the country—immigration would be open without discrimination. Freedom of access, visits, extended pilgrimage and tourism would be guaranteed—subject, of course, to the normal regulation—to all Jews, Moslems or Christians of the world who consider Palestine a holy place worthy of pilgrimage and meditation.

Is the New Palestine Viable?

Several well-intentioned critics maintain that even if the creation of the democratic Palestine is possible, it will not survive for long. Their basic contention is that the population and cultural balance will heavily favor the Jews in the new Palestine. This—in their argument—will lead either to an explosive situation or to the domination of the new Palestine by the Jews and a possible reversion to a neo-Zionist state in disguise.

The argument is serious and looks quite plausible given the present setup and the European dichotomy of "Arabs" as a backward group and "Jews" as a modern one.

As for population, the Jews in Palestine today number 2.5 million, compared to 2.6 million Palestinian Arabs (Christians and Moslems) in the occupied territories before 1967 and after it, and in exile.

Birth rates and net natural growth rates are higher among Arab Palestinians than among the Jews in Palestine.

Immigration, however, has been the major cause of growth in the Jewish ranks. Nevertheless, one must consider the fact that 250,000 Jews have permanently left Palestine (emigrated) since 1949 in a period where relative security prevailed. Most of the emigrants were European Jews, whereas most of the new immigrants were Arab Jews who found it very difficult to stay in their countries after the creation and survival of the aggressor settler-state of Israel.

The process of the revolution will inevitably increase the tempo of emigration, especially of those beneficiaries of a racist state who will find it very difficult to adapt to an open, plural society. Parallel to that development will be the increasing modernization of the Arab countries and toleration of all minorities including the Jewish citizens. Fateh is already engaged in serious negotiations with several Arab countries to allow Jewish emigrants back, to re-

turn their property, and to guarantee them full and equal rights.

These factors are expected, on the whole, to maintain relative population balance in Palestine.

The pace of social and educational development is increasing rapidly among the Arab Palestinians as well. It is estimated that the number of university graduates among the Palestinians in exile exceeds 50,000.

Palestinians have successfully played the role of educators, professionals, and technicians in several Arab countries, especially those in the Arabian peninsula and North Africa. Arab Palestinians faced this cultural challenge in pre-1948 Palestine and managed in the relatively short period of thirty years to compete effectively with the Jews in agriculture, industry, education, and even in the field of finance and banking. Armed with the spirit of a victorious revolution, hopefully in comradeship with a significant number of Jews, the Arabs of Palestine will become effective and equal partners in the building of the new country.

Integration of Palestine within the Arab region will add to its economic and political viability. The present Arab boycott will obviously be replaced by economic aid and trade, a goal which the settler-state of Israel completely failed to achieve, remaining thus an American ward and protege during its entire existence.

Conclusion

The democratic, nonsectarian Palestine still lacks full clarity and elaboration, but this is the best that can be done at this stage of the arduous liberation struggle. Through armed struggle the Palestinians have outgrown their bitterness and prejudice in a relatively short time. A few years ago, discussing this proposal would have been considered as a complete sellout or high treason. Even today, some Arabs still find it very difficult to accept the proposed goal and secretly—or publicly—hope that it is nothing more than a tactical propaganda move.

Well, it is definitely not so. The Palestinian revolution is determined to fight for the creation of the new democratic and non-sectarian Palestine as the long-term ultimate goal of liberation. Annihilation of the Jews or of the Palestinian exiles and the creation of an exclusive racist or theocratic state in Palestine—be it Jewish, Christian, or Moslem—is totally unacceptable, unworkable, and cannot last. The oppressed Palestinian masses will fight and make all needed sacrifices to demolish the oppressor exclusive state.

The Israeli racists are greatly irritated by the idea of a democratic Palestine. It reveals the contradictions of Zionism and bares the moral schizophrenia that has beset world Jewry since the creation of Israel. The adoption of the new goal by several significant progressive Jews scares world Zionism. Israeli Jewish professor Loebel and French Jewish writer Ania Francos were threatened

and molested by Zionists for their sponsorship of a democratic Palestine as the ultimate goal of liberation. The Zionists are stepping up their campaign to discredit the idea, especially among the Jews.

Their effort has been in vain. The force of logic and the effect of years of persecution in exclusive societies at the hands of racists are opening the eyes of Jews and others in the world to the only permanent solution that will bring a lasting peace and justice to our Palestine: building a progressive, open, tolerant country for all of us.

POPULAR DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

The following statement of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine was published in The Palestinian Resistance Movement: A Critical Study, Dar al-Tali'ah, Beirut, 1969. It was published in the United States by the Palestine Solidarity Committee, Buffalo.

A Democratic Solution to the Palestine Question

1. Rejection of the chauvinistic and reactionary Zionist-colonial solutions which are based on recognizing the state of Israel as one of the facts of the Middle East area: because these solutions, besides contradicting the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in their land, consecrate the Zionist expansionist entity in liaison with colonialism, and are hostile to the Palestinian and Arab national liberation movements and all the progressive and socialist forces in the world.

2. Rejection of the chauvinistic solutions of some Palestinians and Arabs, which were put forward before and after June 1967, and are based on slaughtering the Jews and throwing them into the sea. It also rejects the reactionary solutions which are based on accepting the state of Israel within secure and recognized boundaries, as exemplified in the November Security Council resolution. The aforementioned solutions are put forward at the expense of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination in their land, and would implant in the Middle East area a racist, capitalist, expansionist state dialectically in liaison with world capitalism which is hostile to the Palestinian and Arab national liberation

movements, and all the progressive and socialist forces in the world.

3. The struggle for a popular democratic solution for the Palestinian and Israeli questions to be based on the liquidation of the Zionist entity exemplified in all the government establishments (army, administration, police) and all the chauvinistic Zionist political and labor organizations. The establishment of a people's democratic Palestine state in which the Arabs and (Israeli) Jews will live without any discrimination whatsoever, a state which is against all forms of class and national subjugation, and which gives both Arabs and (Israeli) Jews the right to develop their national culture.

4. In accordance with the link of history and destiny that exists between Palestine and the Arab nation, the people's democratic state of Palestine will be an integral part of an Arab federal state in this area. The Palestinian state will have a democratic content hostile to colonialism, imperialism, and Arab and Palestinian reaction.

5. The democratic solution put forward is capable of liberating the Arab and the Jew from all forms of chauvinistic (racist) culture—liberating the Arab from reactionary culture, and the Jew from Zionist culture.

6. The democratic solution, being hostile to class and national subjugation, is capable of disassociating Palestine from imperialism, and converting it into a progressive revolutionary fortress on the side of all forces in the world struggling against imperialism and counterrevolution.

7. The national liberation movement will only be able to realize the people's democratic state of Palestine by armed struggle and a popular war of liberation against Zionism, imperialism, and reaction, and by eliminating the Israeli state and liberating the Jews from the Zionist movement. Only by continuous armed struggle against all chauvinistic, reactionary, and colonial solutions, can we achieve the total and complete liberation of Palestine and the establishment of the democratic state which will encompass Arabs and (Israeli) Jews enjoying equal national rights and obligations—a state in the service of all the forces struggling for national liberation and progress in this world.

The Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine calls on all the Israeli and Jewish elements and groupings who are hostile to Zionism and imperialism to support the above solution and participate in the common Palestinian and people's armed

struggle for the implementation of this democratic revolutionary solution.

The following statement by Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was published in al-Hurriyah, January 12, 1970. The English translation was published in the United States by the Palestine Solidarity Committee, Buffalo.

A Democratic Solution for the Palestinian Problem

The Middle East crisis is becoming more and more complicated as a result of the attitudes of Israeli reaction and of American imperialism. Both of them are insisting on reaping the harvest of the consequences of the 1967 war. Their demands include recognition of Israel within secure frontiers which, far from corresponding to the pre-June 1967 frontiers, imply further territorial expansion at the expense of the people of Palestine and the neighboring Arab peoples. They also demand that a crushing defeat be inflicted on the Arab national liberation movement, and that the class and political map of the Middle East be redrawn in accordance with the interests of American imperialism in particular and those of Zionism and Arab reaction in general. This was why the wars of 1948, 1956, and 1967 were fought.

In spite of the fact that the ruling-class forces in Israel rejected the November 22 Security Council resolution, an objective observer cannot but remark that this rejection was not absolute; acceptance of the resolution was made conditional on new expansionist gains and negotiations with the Arab regimes (the Rhodes formula, for example). Even though the U.S. approved the Security Council resolution, the American attitude is—practically and objectively—the same as the Israeli attitude, not to mention U.S. ambitions to liquidate the petit-bourgeois nationalist regimes in the area as a step towards the eventual repression and liquidation of the Arab national liberation movement.

Because the Security Council resolution stands on two legs, not one only (the withdrawal of Israeli forces to the June 5 frontiers and, in return for this, recognition both of the fait accompli which confronts the people of Palestine and of secure frontiers for the state of Israel), the Palestinian resistance movement immediately rejected it, though naturally the reasons for this rejection were different from those of the Zionists. For acceptance of the resolution directly implies:

1. Endorsement of the conquest and loss of territory that befell the people of Palestine in 1948.
2. The liquidation of the Palestinian resistance movement to

safeguard the frontiers of the state of Israel.

3. The continued existence of an expansionist state closely linked with American imperialism by virtue of the common interest of the two parties that Israel should continue to exist as an instrument for expansion and for the repression of the national liberation movement in the Middle East.

The Palestinian resistance movement therefore sees the Security Council resolution as a reactionary and imperialist solution of both the Palestinian and the Israeli questions. This view is incompatible with that of most of the Arab regimes, which either accept the resolution, or reject it in theory but in practice work along with it; Saudi Arabia is a case in point. What then is the solution?

The resistance proposes a democratic solution of the problem that calls for long-term political, ideological, and armed struggle. For only if the struggle is carried on in all three fields can it assume its truly practical and objective significance. The democratic solution proposed rejects all the chauvinistic solutions, whether Arab or Israeli, which were in existence until June 5, 1967: Israeli expansion, or massacring the Jews and throwing them into the sea, etc. It also rejects the reactionary solution offered by the Security Council resolution. What it is striving for is the right of the Palestinian people to decide their own future in their own territory, which was seized from them by a nationalist, Zionist, and imperialist act of usurpation in 1948, and the construction of a democratic popular state in the whole of the territory of Palestine in which Arabs and Jews will enjoy equal rights and obligations, everyone being entitled to develop his national culture in a democratic, progressive spirit. The constitutional form assumed by this state is not important—it may be a unitary state, or a federal one, on the model of Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia, or anything else.

With this end in view PDFLP submitted to the Sixth National Palestinian Congress that met in Cairo in early September 1969 and, at the same time, to the Palestinian and Arab masses, a "proposed democratic solution of the Palestinian and Israeli problems." Obviously, this solution can only be achieved through long-term ideological, progressive, popular armed struggle; and it must be supported by the common struggle of all progressive and democratic forces in the area, especially in the ranks of the Palestinian resistance movement, Israeli society and progressive Jews. This proposed democratic solution, in fact, calls on all progressive Israelis and Jews to organize themselves into an armed popular Palestinian front to ensure the day-by-day objective implementation of this solution. For as progressive and democratic trends grow stronger in the ranks of all the Palestinian resistance organizations, this solution will impose itself all the more forcefully on the citizens of Israel. Israeli reaction cannot always be watching Israeli society, and reactionary Zionist culture must inevitably disappear

as progressive trends grow stronger in the Palestinian and Arab national liberation movement.

With this progressive aim in view, PDFLP has called for a dialogue to be initiated with Israeli organizations which follow an anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist line, although they have not yet arrived at a decisively progressive attitude in their understanding of the Palestine problem and the nature of the composition of the state of Israel. Such Israeli organizations are Rakah and Matzpen. PDFLP has published in *al-Hurriyah* several analyses of Matzpen, and in its pamphlets has clearly drawn the distinction between the attitude of this organization and that of the Zionist left (Mapai) and the Israeli reactionary forces.

The radical democratic solution of the Palestine problem is a long and complicated question in an area thick with reactionary regimes that are allied with colonialism and imperialism and steeped in a rightist reactionary culture. To use a Marxist expression—the prevailing culture is the culture of the predominant classes. It is an area, too, in which an essentially Zionist state has been established—a state with a double character, with chauvinistic and expansionist ambitions. It has organic links with colonialism and imperialism and, with its reactionary Zionist culture, plays a double role in the area, in addition to the fact that it is a state established on the conquest and the national usurpation of the people of Palestine. "A people that persecutes another people cannot be a free people," Marx said, and his saying has been borne out by the course of ancient, medieval, and contemporary history.

In the Arab world, as is the case with the peoples of all backward countries, the only way to rout the counterrevolutionary forces and to defeat them by imposing solutions which will ensure that the people can choose their own future by themselves and in their own territory, is by adopting the Vietnamese method—the method of a popular war of liberation to overcome the technical superiority of imperialism, Zionism and reaction. This is the course being followed by the Palestinian resistance movement, in preference to traditional wars in which victory must go to the triple counteralliance. In spite of the crisis which is now besetting the Palestinian resistance movement as a result of the composition of a number of its petit-bourgeois leadership cadres, the left wing of the resistance, in bearing arms against imperialism, Zionism, and reaction, is also fighting ideologically and politically for the development of the resistance movement along progressive and democratic lines. The daily growing victory of Vietnam is the result of a popular war led by a united liberation front in which the revolutionary communist party plays the central role in leading the operation of national liberation and the democratic revolution.

However complicated the Palestinian and Israeli questions, it is only through the insistence of the resistance movement, and its

left wing in particular, on breaking the reactionary regimes and rejecting reactionary solutions, that a new trail can be blazed towards the liberation of the peoples of the Middle East. Even if, for local and international reasons which cannot be discussed in the present context, the ruling and dominating regimes in the area succeed in imposing reactionary solutions and repressing the Palestinian resistance movement which rejects such solutions, the resistance movement will have achieved an important revolutionary advance if it sows the seeds of a violent democratic revolution in the Middle East in the near future. For the course of history is forward; adverse forces may sometimes compel it to take a step backwards, but this is only a preparation for two steps forward.

The following is an answer by Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DF), to a question concerning that organization's proposed solution "for the Israeli and Palestinian questions." It is excerpted from an interview that appeared in the January 19-February 1 issue of the Paris publication Africasia. The English translation of the interview appeared in Intercontinental Press, March 9, 1970, copyright © 1970 by Intercontinental Press, and is reprinted by permission.

For the first time in the history of the Arab revolution, the DF has proposed an internationalist solution to the Israeli and Palestinian questions. *Up to now, in relating to the Israeli question, Arabs have been under the influence of the ideology of the ruling classes, a feudal and religious, or at best, petty-bourgeois ideology, with an anti-Semitic tinge.*

All of the solutions to the Israeli problem presented so far by the Arab right have been racist and chauvinist, varying between "driving the Jews into the sea" and at best sending them back to their countries of origin. The Arab and Palestinian right have been raking up the history of the Prophet's disputes with the Arab Jews in order to incite anti-Jewish hatred. For twenty years, exploiting the Palestinian problem has been a profitable business in the Arab countries; it served as an alibi and cover for every dubious undertaking.

Today, the Arab reaction is raising the slogan of "unity of all classes for the liquidation of Israel."

On the other hand, the Jews throughout their long history have been subjected to the same chauvinist education. Under the cover of slogans such as "the chosen people," the Jewish feudalists were able to mask the class contradictions within the Jewish community, creating contradictions between the Jews as a whole on one side and the "gentiles" on the other.

In the modern period, too, Jewish capitalism has likewise subjected the Jews to its ideological domination with the slogans "Unity of all Jews" and "The Jewish question must be solved by the return of the Jews to the promised land," etc. Jewish capitalism has taken advantage of its struggle against European capitalism and all the suffering this struggle has brought on the Jewish people, and especially its poorer strata, to isolate the Jewish proletariat from the workers of their respective countries.

All the efforts by the first Marxists, by the Social Democracy, and later by the Bolsheviks, were in vain. The ideological and religious alienation of the oppressed Jews was stronger than their real interests. The example of Poale Zion and the Bund is very significant in this regard.

The founding of the Zionist state was to reinforce this alienation. All, or almost all, the Israeli parties have openly or surreptitiously adopted the Zionist positions. There is, of course, the Israeli Communist Party, which split into a Zionist and pro-Soviet wing after the June war.

In fact, there is no fundamental difference between them because they both propose a reactionary solution based on maintaining Israel, an oppressive usurper state linked to imperialism. At present there is only one small group in Israel, the Israeli Socialist Organization (Matzpen), which is evolving toward a progressive solution of the question.

As for us, we intend to build a democratic and socialist state where Israelis and Arabs will enjoy the same rights; a state where there will be no form of oppression; a state, finally, where the power, and all the power, will be exercised by workers' and peasants' soviets.

It is in this sense that we intend to destroy the apparatus of the Zionist state. The future state will be integrated into an Arab federation or confederation (like Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia, for example). The organizational form matters little. What matters is the type of regime.

POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

The following is chapter 10 of A Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine, a basic document prepared for the Second Congress of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, held in February 1969. The English translation was published in Amman in 1969 by the information department of the PFLP.

The Aims and Significance of the Palestinian War of Liberation

That Israel constitutes an aggressive presence against our people from the outset is an indisputable fact. For our people, the rise of Israel has meant the expulsion of this people from its home and lands, the usurpation of all that our people had built through its labor and effort, the dispersal of our people throughout the Arab world and the world at large, and the concentration of the greater portion of it in the camps of misery and poverty scattered in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon without hope and without future.

That Israel constitutes a colonialist expansionist presence at the expense of Arab land and its owners is not a matter for discussion. For us it is the tangible experience before which all spurious claims and allegations fade away. The "National Home" for the Jews in Palestine became the "State of Israel" within the boundaries of the partition resolutions adopted by the United Nations in 1947. It then expanded to include Israel with its pre-June boundaries, which are far more extensive than those established by the United Nations resolutions of 1947, and finally expanded once again to include the whole of Palestine as well as Sinai and the Golan Heights.

That Israel is an imperialist and colonialist base on our land and is being used to stem the tide of revolution, to ensure our continued subjection, and to maintain the process of pillage and exploitation of our wealth and efforts, is a self-evident fact which does not need discussion. For us this is not merely a theoretical conclusion but represents our actual experience during the Tripartite Aggression of 1956, during the June 1967 war, and throughout the existence of Israel on our soil.

However, the truth about our war of liberation has been distorted as a result of several factors. First of all there was the connection between the rise of the Zionist movement and the persecution of the Jews in Europe. Then there was the association made between the rise of Israel and the Nazis' treatment of the Jews in the Second World War. In addition to these there was the dominating imperialist and Zionist influence over large sections of

world opinion, the existence in Israel of forces which claim to be progressive and socialist, and the Soviet Union's and some socialist countries' support for the establishment of Israel. All these together with the error of certain Palestinian and Arab leaderships in the manner of their presentation of the struggle against Israel have distorted the truth about our liberation war and still threaten to distort the proper view of the true nature of this war in the eyes of many people.

The Palestinian liberation movement is not a racial movement with aggressive intentions against the Jews. It is not directed against the Jews. Its object is to destroy the state of Israel as a military, political, and economic establishment which rests on aggression, expansion and organic connection with imperialist interests in our homeland. It is against Zionism as an aggressive racial movement connected with imperialism which has exploited the sufferings of the Jews as a stepping-stone for the promotion of its interests and the interests of imperialism in this part of the world, which possesses rich resources and provides a bridgehead into the countries of Africa and Asia. The aim of the Palestinian liberation movement is to establish a democratic national state in Palestine in which both Arabs and Jews will live as citizens with equal rights and obligations and which will constitute an integral part of the progressive, democratic Arab national presence living peacefully with all forces of progress in the world.

Israel has insisted on portraying our war against it as a racial war aimed at eliminating every Jewish citizen and throwing him into the sea. The purpose behind this is to mobilize all Jews for a life-or-death struggle. Consequently, a basic strategic line in our war with Israel must aim at unveiling this misrepresentation, addressing the exploited and misled Jewish masses and revealing the conflict between these masses' interest in living peacefully and the interests of the Zionist movement and the forces controlling the state of Israel. It is this strategic line which will ensure for us the isolation of the fascist clique in Israel from all the forces of progress in the world. It will also ensure for us, with the growth of the armed struggle for liberation and clarification of its identity, the widening of the conflict existing objectively between Israel and the Zionist movement on the one hand and the millions of misled and exploited Jews on the other.

The Palestinian liberation movement is a progressive national movement against the forces of aggression and imperialism. The fact that imperialist interests are linked with the existence of Israel will make our struggle against Israel a struggle against imperialism, and the linking of the Palestinian liberation movement with the Arab liberation movement will make our struggle against Israel the struggle of one hundred million Arabs in their united national effort for liberation. The struggle for Palestine today,

and all the objective circumstances attendant upon it, will make this struggle an introduction to the realization of all the aims of the Arab revolution, which are linked together. It is a wide and vast historical movement launched by one hundred million Arabs in a large area of the world against the forces of evil, aggression, and exploitation represented by neocolonialism and imperialism in this epoch of human history.

Finally, the struggle for Palestine will, as regards the Palestinian and Arab masses, be a gateway to the culture of the age and a transition from a state of underdevelopment to the requirements of modern life. Through the struggle we shall acquire political awareness of the facts of the age, throw away illusions, and learn the value of facts. The habits of underdevelopment represented by submission, dependence, individualism, tribalism, laziness, anarchy, and impulsiveness will change through the struggle into recognition of the values of time, order, accuracy, objective thought, collective action, planning, and comprehensive mobilization; the pursuit of learning and the acquisition of all its weapons; the value of man; the emancipation of woman (which constitute half of our society) from the servitude of outworn customs and traditions; the fundamental importance of the national bond in facing danger; and the supremacy of this bond over clan, tribal and regional bonds.

Our national, long-term liberation struggle will mean our fusion in a new way of life which will be our gateway to progress and civilization.

The following is an answer by Dr. George Habash, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to the question whether the concept of "a democratic Palestinian state" conflicts with the need to mobilize the Arab masses at large for liberation. This interview was originally published in the Lebanese newspaper al-Ahrar (no. 682, May 23, 1970). The English translation was printed in the 1970 PFLP pamphlet, Palestine: Towards a Democratic Solution.

We have to explain what is meant by the "democratic Palestinian state" concept. Is it meant to lead to the setting up of a Palestinian state which has no definite national identity and which will consequently have its own peculiar conditions stripped off from the Arab homeland and nation and forming no integral part of the Arab presence in the area? As far as we know, none of the resistance organizations adopt such a view. On the other hand, the future of Palestine, viewed from its connection with the future of the Arab homeland and nation, will be defined by the objective developments of the struggle in the area, rather than by an ab-

stract concept adopted by a certain organization or number of organizations. The basic conflict in the area is a conflict between Israel, Zionism, imperialism, and the local reactionary forces on one side and the masses of the whole Arab area on the other.

This is the objective and materialist fact behind the conflict, and consequently no concept can limit such a conflict within the confines of a Palestinian territorial circle. The fact that the Palestinian revolution is inseparable from the Arab revolution is not mere abstract thinking, nor national aspirations floating in thin air. It is a fact that has its material base and roots in the nature of the conflict and the struggle, i.e., from the nature of the battle. Even at this preliminary stage of the revolution, we find the beginnings of the organic link between the territorial and the pan-Arab aspects of the revolution, a link that is already leading the Palestinian revolution in the direction of full coalescence with the Arab revolution.

The fact that Israeli, Zionist, imperialist, and reactionary aggression and exploitation is being directed against the whole area and its masses is revealed every day through the onslaughts of the enemy against the masses in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and the whole area at large. This fact objectively leads to a mobilization of all these masses to face this contradiction and defeat it. Hence the beginnings of a unified Palestinian-Jordanian national movement, and the beginnings of an interconnection between the Palestinian national movement and its Lebanese counterpart.

Where would such a start lead to, and in which direction would it be driven by the objective forces of the existing conflict in the area? This start will definitely go in the direction of complete and strong coalescence of the Palestinian revolution with its Arab counterpart; in the direction of the unity of the Arab liberation movement; and finally in the direction of the unity of the revolutionary instrument as well as the unity of the whole area.

The liberation of Palestine is a difficult and long process. Along the course of the path of liberation a good many radical developments are bound to happen within the area surrounding Israel in particular, as well as within the whole Arab world at large. It is impossible that the outlook of the area will remain in the future as it is now, considering the years of growth of the revolution and the movement of the masses in the face of Israeli-imperialist aggression.

A process of unification and revolutionization will accompany the growth of the revolution. Hence the liberation of Palestine will not eventually be accomplished through the medium of the present Arab setup, but rather as the consummate result of the process of unification and radical changes all over the Arab area, the area surrounding Israel in particular. Eventually there will

be a liberated Palestine free of Zionism and imperialism, forming a natural inseparable part of a unified revolutionary Arab setup. Eventually, too, the Palestinian liberation movement will have thoroughly coalesced with the pan-Arab liberation movement and with the pan-Arab revolution. The army that will liberate Palestine will be an inseparable part of the Arab liberation army under the command of the pan-Arab revolution.

In the light of such objective visualization of the future struggle and events within the area, the PFLP view is that the genuine content of the concept of a "democratic Palestinian state" and its practical interpretation lie in presenting a democratic solution of the Jewish question in Palestine in such a way that all Jewish citizens would and should equally and indiscriminately enjoy the rights of citizenship within a liberated Palestine, organically united with the Arab homeland and nation. The Palestinian-Arab liberation movement is no aggressive racial movement, nor is it hostile to the Jews as such, seeking their extermination or driving them into the sea. On the contrary, it is a progressive liberation movement aiming at the liberation of Palestine from the Israeli-Zionist presence which is allied to imperialism and reaction. Once this presence is dismantled, the alternative will be a progressive democratic Arab society that guarantees complete and unimpaired rights to each and every citizen.

Such a society, which objectively provides full economic and social liberation to all its citizens, will guarantee the disappearance of any objective grounds for Zionist ideology to reemerge, and will have offered a scientific, humanitarian, democratic, and progressive solution of the Jewish problem.

The following statement by a representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was printed in the Baghdad Observer in response to the question, "How does the PFLP view a liberated Palestine?" The English translation was printed in the 1970 PFLP pamphlet, Palestine: Towards a Democratic Solution.

To try to give geographical dimensions to a coming historical stage within the framework of a previous stage, especially at a time and in an atmosphere of fast historical and revolutionary change, is some kind of a transgression and an attempt to restrain the movement of history. Some people have been attracted towards this geographical compulsion of history out of mere verbal superfluity without real understanding of its inherent dangers. In our opinion this question falls into the pitfall of that geographical compulsion which represents a crooked vision and an incorrect view of the future by failing to take into consideration the following:

In spite of the fact that the Palestinian people have been the first target of the imperialist-Zionist onslaught, and the consequent necessity for them to be in the vanguard of struggle against this onslaught, the basic and main conflict remains one between the progressive Arab liberation movement on the one hand, and the enemy camp embodying world imperialism headed by the United States, Zionism, and Israel, as well as Arab reaction, on the other.

Viewing the conflict in its real dimensions will immediately lead us to view the role of the Arab masses in the area of the struggle as a basic condition which, historically as well as practically, is precedent to the Palestinian masses' achievement of the liberation of Palestine.

This understanding in practice means that the liberation of Palestine is linked with the liberation of the masses of, at least, the Arab countries adjoining Palestine from the burdens of their present conditions: the reactionary regimes, economic and social relations based on exploitation, the repressive forces, and the factors of backwardness and disunity. The liberation of Palestine will be achieved by a broad progressive national liberation movement whose base is far wider than the Palestinian masses and whose geographical area is larger than Palestine. Consequently the form of the state which will be set up after liberation will not be bound geographically by the boundaries of Palestine as they were drawn up by the British mandate after World War I, but rather by those boundaries that will be drawn up by the progressive, socialist popular movement of struggle that will bring about Palestine's liberation—boundaries which cannot practically be fixed by anybody as of this moment, given the defined conceivable realities at this very early stage of the liberation movement. We cannot at this time be decisive in fixing any boundaries for the liberation movement in relation to the stage that shortly precedes that of total liberation of Palestine, and it is not possible to link its geographical boundaries with the accomplishment of the liberation task.

This introduction, which many people tend to neglect, leads us to abandon the view of a "free Palestine" in terms of freedom as something metaphysical. It is very much like what is claimed by some people: the existence of a "classless state which is neutral among all classes of society."

The geographical dimensions of a liberated "Palestine" are linked to the movement of struggle which will attain its liberation in the same manner as its political and social contents are linked to the similar contents of the liberation movement. We should have a clear strategic vision—a vision which is not determined by whether we want a formula that is a "ready-made theory" or not, but rather is determined by real scientific consciousness of the nature of the conflict and its content, and consequently the nature of the struggle and its content as well.

The PFLP envisages a state of the united and socialist proletarian Arab masses, a state which the progressive Arab national liberation movement's struggle aims to set up. This struggle is confronted by the enemy camp of world imperialism, Zionism, Israel, and Arab reaction, all attempting to defeat and halt its progress with all possible means—of which the imperialist-Zionist onslaught is the foremost example.

As we have said earlier, the achievement of the liberation of Palestine is linked with the carrying of the struggle to a stage more advanced than it is at present. We have stressed that the forces of liberation are the organized proletarian masses armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, which holds that the working class is the only class which has an interest in liberation and is capable of liberating other classes of society and establishing a genuine democratic state.

The PFLP view of the establishment of a working-class state throws light on the content of the liberated society which the Front is fighting to establish. In that society alone will real and genuine democracy be achieved—a democracy of the working classes where all forms of economic and social exploitation as well as national, racial, religious, or other oppression disappears. In such a society all people are equal in their social rights and obligations regardless of religion, sect, or racial origin, or any other differences found in feudal and capitalist societies that are based on exploitation.

Problems of oppressed minorities that are faced in our societies today will disappear. Such problems of oppression and discrimination are those experienced not only by the masses of national and religious minorities, but by the Arab masses in general as well, in the oppression of the exploiting classes against the exploited working class.

If the purpose of the question is to know the future position of the Jews in particular in such a state, it should be clear that they will be part of the citizenship of that state—enjoying what other citizens enjoy on the one hand, having equal obligations on the other.

The only solution to all these problems is the socialist solution which is capable of being achieved at the hands of the working class allied with the other toiling and poor classes. The nature of the struggle assures that national liberation in our present circumstances is a matter that cannot be realized except by the mass movement led by the working class, under its progressive socialist ideology.

To sum up, we can say that the economic and social content of the coming liberated society stems from the content of the liberation movement which will bring about its realization.

Further Reading

Readings in this subject available from Pathfinder Press:

HOW CAN THE JEWS SURVIVE? A Socialist Answer to Zionism

by George Novack

24 pp., 25c

Well-known American Marxist scholar George Novack reviews *The Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays* by the late Isaac Deutscher.

ZIONISM AND THE ARAB REVOLUTION: The Myth of Progressive Israel

by Peter Buch

32 pp., 35c

In addition to the title article, this pamphlet contains two documents issued by the Israeli Socialist Organization, supporters of a non-Zionist, socialist solution in the Mideast.

BURNING ISSUES OF THE MIDEAST CRISIS

by Peter Buch

32 pp., 40c

In this fact-crammed study the author traces the development of Zionism from its origins to its conflict with the Palestinian liberation movement.

ISRAEL AND THE ARABS

24 pp., 40c

This is a collection of readers' letters to the editor of the weekly socialist newspaper *The Militant*, written after the June 1967 war, debating divergent views on the Mideast conflict.

LEON TROTSKY ON THE JEWISH QUESTION

by Leon Trotsky

32 pp., 50c

Trotsky's last decade (1930-1940) coincided with the growing menace of fascism on a world scale. These interviews, letters, and articles from that period analyze Zionism, the Soviet experiment in Birobidjan, and anti-Semitism.

FASCISM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

by Leon Trotsky

32 pp., 50c

There is much current confusion about what fascism is. In this collection of essays, Trotsky applies his Marxist scalpel to the social order which, under definite historical conditions, gives rise to the fascist form of capitalist class rule.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ISRAEL AND ZIONISM

by Nathan Weinstock and Jon Rothschild

16 pp., 25c

The nature of Israel and the question of whether socialism and Zionism are compatible, discussed in two articles.